STRENGTH IN Weakness.

A

SERMON

Preached at the FUNERAL of

Mrs. MARTHA BROOKS,

Late WIFE to

Mr. THO. BROOKS Minister of the Gospel in *London*;

Who Departed this Life *June* 20. 1676.

To which are Added

Some EXPERIENCES of the Grace and Dealings of GOD, Observed and Gathered by a near Relation of the said Mrs. *Brooks*

By J. C. a Friend of the Deceased, and her Surviving Husband.

2 COR. 12. 10.

Ὅταν γὰρ ἀσθενῶ, τότε δυνατός εἰμι.

HEB 11. 24.

Ἐγενήθη μεγὰς ἀπὸ ἀσθενείας.

LONDON,

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To the READER, especially the Friends of the deceased.

Candid Reader,

THE *Author of the ensuing Sermon was prevailed with at first to Preach it by an importunity which he could not well resist, and by the like now to Permit the Printing of it, not in the least foreseeing at the first, that his yielding to the former would render him obnoxious to the later; which if he had, he should either wholly have declined it (having no desire at all to be known to the World, but to contain himself within his own Sphere and Province,* Et spartam quam nactus est (pro viribus) ornare, *nor judging any thing of his worthy of publike View, or at least have taken other Measures in the management of it. Here is nothing single or extraordinary pretended to; Nothing in the Contexture or Workmanship thereof, but a brief Explication and Application of the Text being therein designed*

The Publication of it is wholly to be ascribed to the desire of them that heard it, but for which the Writing and thy Reading of this Apology had been prevented.

And for you the Friends of the Deceased, (to comply with whose desires (doubtless resulting more from your affections to the deceased, then any great excellence apprehended

prehended in the Discourse) the Author hath thus far denied himself, and crossed his own inclinations) he desires no more but your favourable acceptance of his good-will to serve you, and your charitable connivance at the defects herein. And that you and he may all soe prove this text, as that we may finde it made good unto us in time of need. And if this poor Sermon prove helpful to any herein, the Publication thereof will not need to be repented of.

A SERMON

Preached at

The Funeral of Mrs. MARTHA BROOKS June 23. 1676. London

PSAL. 73. v. 26. *My Flesh and my Heart faileth, but God is the Strength of my Heart and my Portion for ever.*

IN this Psalm (that I may avoid all Prefacing or Apologies for this Undertaking) the Psalmist discovers a great Combat or Contest that he had in his own Breast, betwixt the *Flesh* and the *Spirit*, betwixt his *Reason* and his *Faith*. The Question debated is, *Whether is the more Happy, the Godly or the Ungodly?* And the Ground of the Question is, Because of the happiness and present Prosperity of the later, and manifold Afflictions of the former; A subject it is, that hath exercised the Minds not only of many wise and learned Men among the Heathens, but also of many within the Church of God, who had the Advantage of a

 greater

greater Light to resolve this Case unto them; And in this Psalm there may be observed three General Parts.

I. In the first place, the Psalmist begins with a holy Caution or Profession of his Faith, *ver.* 1. *Truly God is good to* Israel, *even to such as are of a clean Heart*, q. d. this Conclusion is always to be held, whatsoever contrary Appearance we may behold: Whatsoever I have said, or shall say, yet this Principle I retain as indubitable; I still hold fast this Conclusion, and I would have all that I say so to be interpreted, as no way to cross the same: Though I am puzled with this great Objection, and cannot well resolve all the *Phænomena*, or answer all Objections that are made against it; yet I hold this Principle firm and unshaken, *That God is good to* Israel, *even to them that are of a clean heart.* And in this manner do the Holy Men of God commonly enter upon the discourse of this subject. The Prophet *Jeremy* seems to be at a great loss in this case, (as the Psalmist here) yet he professed this Conclusion, before he entred upon it, *Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee: yet let me talk with thee of thy Judgements: Why doth the way of the wicked prosper?* &c. Jer. 12. begin. And so likewise the Prophet *Habakkuk*, *Thou art of purer eyes*, O Lord God, my Holy One, *then to behold iniquity*; yet, saith he, *Why dost thou look on them that deal treacherously?* Hab. 1. 13. so the Psalmist here lays down this Principle in the beginning, as that which he was resolved on, and would hold fast, whatever contrary appearance might be. He begins the Psalm, as it were, abruptly,

ruptly, *& ex improviso*; אך *truly*; or *but* God is good; rendred *veruntamen, atqui, profectò*, &c. as if the Psalmist had been in a great Combat within himself, as at another time, *Psal.* 39. 1, 2, 3. *I held my Peace, my heart waxed hot within me, the fire burned, then spake I with my tongue. But yet however it be*, (as some Translations render it) *God is good to* Israel; that I believe and resolve on, *He is good to* Israel, *even to them that are of a clean heart.*

II. In the next Place, he lays open the Case as it was debated within himself, and this runs through the greatest part of the Psalm; he begins *v.* 2. and ends *v.*20. and here he shews

1. First of all, the Prosperity together with the great wickedness of the wicked, from the 2. *v.* to the 12. Then

2. The Afflictions of himself with other godly like himself, and their great integrity, *All the day long have I been Plagued and Chastened every Morning*, though *I have clensed my heart, and washed my hands in Innocency*, *v.* 13, 14. And

3. He shews the dreadful Conclusion, that he was even about to make from the consideration of these things; *Verily*, at *v.* 13. *I have clensed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in Innocency.*

4. In the next place, he shews us the great dread and danger, that he apprehended in that Conclusion; *v.* 15. If I say, I will speak thus: Behold, I should offend against the generation of thy Children; as if he had said; If I did make this Conclusion, I must conclude not only my self, but all thy Children to be miserable and far from happiness.

5. In the next place, how difficult he found it to avoid this Conclusion, and to get over it, *v.* 16. *When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me.*

6. Then he shews the means he used to get light herein, and that was by going into the Sanctuary, *v.*17. And

7. Then lastly, the success thereof; there he learned three things concerning the wicked. 1. There he learned their end, *v.* 17. 2. Their present uncertainty, they were *set in slippery places*, *v.*18. And then 3. Their certain and sudden destruction, *v.* 18, 19,20. Thus you have the state determined by the Prophet. And in the

III. And last part of the Psalm he makes Use and Emprovement of this Experience; and that is manifold.

1. In the first place you have a sensible Confession of his own weakness and folly, *v.* 21,22. *Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins. So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a Beast before thee.*

2. A grateful Acknowledgement of God's Presence and Support hitherto, notwithstanding all his weakness and folly, *v.* 23. *Nevertheless, I am continually with thee, thou hast holden me by my right hand.*

3. A Profession of his confidence of the same Presence and Power of God with him for time to come; *Thou shalt guide me with thy Counsel, and afterward receive me to Glory*, v. 24.

4. He declares his Resolution for the future, to *have none in Heaven but God, nor any in Earth besides him*, v.25. And

5. Here

5. Here in my Text he gives you the ground of that resolution, because *his flesh and heart fail*, but *God* he found to be *the strength of his Heart and his Portion for ever.*

6. Lastly, in the two Verses following my Text we have the Conclusion of the whole matter, and the blessed determination of the case that was debated as concerning the wicked, *v.*27. *For lo, they that are far from thee, shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee*; and the true gain of Godliness, and the course he was resolved to take, in the last verse. *But it is good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord God, that I may declare all his works*: Where he makes a contrary Conclusion to what the Flesh was ready to take up, *v.*13. There it was ready to conclude, I have clensed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency; here he determines the contrary, *But it is good for me to draw near to God*, &c.

Thus much for the general Account of the Psalm; My Text gives you the Ground and Reason of that *Resolution* and *Affection*, that was professed in the foregoing verse, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none upon Earth I desire besides thee*: and the reason hereof is here rendred in my Text, *My Flesh and my Heart fails, but God is the Strength of my Heart and my Portion for ever.* In which words you have these two Parts.

1. A Confession of his own natural weakness in himself, *My Flesh and my Heart faileth.*

2. That Divine Support and Satisfaction afforded him

him of God in those words, *God is the Strength of my heart, and my Portion for ever.* I shall speak something (though but briefly) upon each of these: Time will not give me leave to enlarge. If I should amplifie according to the weight of the matter before us, it would require many Discourses to set forth these things at large.

1. We have an Ackowledgement of his own natural frailtie and weaknes, *My Flesh and my Heart failes.* By *Flesh* sometimes is meant in Scripture, *the Body of Corruption:* but here I understand our *natural body, the outward man*; and by *Heart* I understand, *the Mind and inward Man, that is the Seat of Reason, Judgement, Wisdom, Courage* and *Resolution.* Now (saith he) both these *Fail*, the word signifies to *languish* and *decay.* *Ainsworth* translates it, *Wholly consumed is my Flesh and my Heart:* it signifies a languishing and decaying state: And the sense of the first part of the Verse is, That the Flesh was no longer able to bear, nor could the Heart tell what course to take; *My Flesh and Heart fails:* Nature is sick, all manner of power and ability with him at a loss, and *Non-Plus*, and knows not what to do. So that I observe from hence.

Doctrine.

1. *That the Flesh and Heart of Man is weak, and will certainly fail sooner or later.* That which *David* found we shall all find some time or other. *Man* (saith the Psalmist) *in his best state is altogether vanity*, Psal. 39. v. 5. *Man* is made up of two parts, *outward* and *inward*, or (as it is in my Text) the *Flesh* and the *Heart*, both these are frail, and weak, and subject to mis-

miscarry, they fail us sooner or later, and there is no avoiding of it.

1. As for the Flesh, that is first mentioned, how often doth the Scripture compare it to Grass, and to the Flower of the Field withering and come to nothing, and that in a little moment? *Psa.90. ver.5,6.* (saith the Psalmist there) *They are as a sleep: In the morning they are like the Grass, which groweth up, in the morning Flourishing, in the Evening it is cut down, and withers.* To the same purpose, *Psa.103, ver.15,16. As for man, his dayes are as Grass; as the Flower of the Field Flourishing, and the wind passethover it and it is gone, and the place thereof knows it no more.* Such is our outward man; so set forth in Scripture by a weak and frail thing, which if trouble and afflictions do not break and bring down; yet most certainly sickness and death will do it. *It is appointed for us all once to dye,* And death is nothing but breaking down the Powers of Nature.

2. Then the heart of man likewise is subject to fail; so it did here with the Psalmist: not only the flesh, but the heart fails, with fear and sorrow, and with want of wisdome and resolution: So doth the heart of man often times fail. *Levit.26 ver.36.20. I will send faintness in their hearts.* So it is often times, a very small thing breaks the heart of man, makes it melt like water, and fail even as the weakest thing in the World, as the Prophet, *Isa.1 5.* saith concerning *Israel, The Head is sick, and the Heart is Faint.* And our Saviour tells of such things, *That men's hearts shall fail them for looking after such things coming upon the Earth.* Luk.21.26. Not only the flesh

flesh but the heart of man is weak and frail. Human wisdome often fails, and we know not what to do, and Human strength, that we cannot do what we know. The confessions of the godly confirm the same. *Psa. 69. Begin. David* complains that *His Eyes failed*, yea, his spirit failed being overwhelmed with afflictions. And we find the wicked likewise by greater reason often times fail both in flesh and heart, and we know that God hath threatned the same unto them. The Original cause of this weakness is the sin of man. It was sin that brought *Death, and the fear of Death*, weakned our Nature and made it obnoxious to those evils and miseries, which we can neither avoid nor bear up under. Man was Created free from all those *Failings*, but sin hath brought him into subjection to them all. It hath made the outward man subject to Sickness, Pain, Misery, and Death; and our inward man subject to sorrow, shame, care, fear, distraction, and despair. So sorry a thing is Man: as he is called in Scripture, The Law is become weak through the Flesh, and the Flesh through Sin. This is the original cause of this weakness. I shall not stand here any longer, having other things in the following part of the Text to be spoken unto.

Use 1. The Use that I shall make of this first Point, the weakness and frailty of Mans flesh and heart; is to call upon all of you to consider this, and look for it. Consider, and lay to heart, look to it betimes, you have crasie flesh, and weak hearts, and both these will fail you sooner or later; therefore you ought to look betimes, that Provision may be made against the time of need. There is a time

when

when flesh and heart shall fail, all the Powers of Nature will be shaken. Old *Adam* must be dissolved, and brought down to the dust.

1. Consider this you that are young, and strong, whose Blood runs fresh in your Veins, and Bones are full of Marrow. *There is a time when youth shall faint and be weary. The Young Men shall utterly fail.* Isa. 40.30. *Remember* therefore (saith the Wise Man) *thy Creator in the dayes of thy Youth, before the evil dayes come*, (that's certain they will come) *and the Years will Approach wherein you shall say I have no pleasure in them*, Eccles. 12.1. And as he saith, Eccles. 11.8. *Though a man live many years, and rejoyce in them all, yet let him remember the dayes of darkness for they shall be many: all that cometh is Vanity.* Therefore (I say) remember this ye that are young, and strong, that faintness and weakness will come upon you, if death doth not prevent by a sudden stroke. Nature it self decayes, and sickness will bring you down.

2. Consider this, you *that forget God, and put far from you the evil day, and cause the Seat of violence to draw near*; you *that drink Wine in bowls*, and drown all thoughts and considerations of such things as these: Yet do you know, that your present pleasure and enjoyments will either fail from you, or you from them. It is a foolish thing to forget that, which we cannot avoid; if we could so easily put off the things themselves, as we may the thoughts of them, then we had something to countenance us. But weakness and frailness will come upon you, and the End of these things will be nothing else but sorrow

 and

and bitterness. *Can thy heart endure? Or can thy hands be strong in the day that I shall deal with thee?* Ezek.22.14.

3. In a word, consider this all ye that are careless, and neglect the day and duty of Preparation. You that are unmindful of this day, what will you do in the day of trouble, when the flesh and heart shall fail; it is a wonderful thing to see how careless many are of these things, though they see the wise man die as well as the fool; the strong, as well as the feeble; the young, as well as the old; yet notwithstanding how do men forget these things, and neglect that duty, that is greatly incumbent on them. Consider therefore with your selves, have not all that have gone before you, failed? Where are all the great *Heroes*, the mighty Men of the Earth, that were a terrour in the Land of the Living? Have they not all failed, and *slept their sleep*? The strongest flesh, and the stoutest heart that ever was in the world did fail at last. Therefore madness and folly for thee to think to escape, and forget the time. Therefore *Consider this all ye that forget God, lest I tear you in Pieces, and there be none to deliver*, Psal. 50. 22. *What will you do in the day of Visitation? Whither will you flee for help?* Isa.10.3. It is the greatest folly in the World to neglect that time, which once past, can never be recalled: This is the folly of Man (saith the wise man) *Man knows not the time: like the Fish that is caught in the Net, and the Bird in the snare, so is Man, he knows not his time*: Eccl. 9. 12. *Jerusalem* knew not the day of her Visitation, as the foolish Virgins, in like manner.

II. Let

II. Let every one be exhorted to provide in time, and remember that a failing time will come upon Nature, and to make due Provision against that time. Let us set our selves to lay up Provision against the time of need, *Luke* 16.9, *Make to your selves friends of the unrighteous* Mammon, *that when ye fail* (our Saviour takes it for granted, that such a time will be, such a day will come, when not all things else only, but we our selves *shall fail*) *they may receive you into everlasting Habitations. Seek* therefore *the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him whiles he is near*, Isa. 55.6. As the Apostle exhorts, *Let us go boldly to the Throne of Grace to seek for mercy, and obtain Grace to help in time of need*, Heb. 4. *v.* last. There is indeed a time of need coming, need enough be sure, when the outward and inward man fails; when the flesh and heart both fails, it will be a time of great need: if then we are to seek, miserable will that day be to us.

Consider what a mercy it is, that we that are weak and feeble in our selves. may yet *be made strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might*; there is way made for it in Christ, *Isa.*45.*v.*24. *Surely shall one say, in the Lord have I Righteousness and Strength*, &c. Therefore, saith God, *Let not the wise Man glory in his Wisdom, nor the strong man in his Strength, nor the rich man in his Riches, but let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord*, which the Apostle refers to Christ, 1*Cor.* 1. latter end. So doth the Psalmist speak, that he had nothing in himself to glory in, his flesh and he art failed.

2. See now in the next place, where his strength

 lies:

lies; God is the strength of my heart, and my Portion for ever, and this is the latter part of my Text, which declares that divine support, and satisfaction, which God afforded his Servant in this sad case; when his Flesh and Heart failed, then God was his Strength and Portion. Here are two Expressions of what *David* found and enjoyed, 1. That God was his strength, and 2. His Portion: of each of these somthing. My task is to go through the text.

1. *God is the strength of my heart*; The Septuagint reads it [ὁ Θεὸς τῆς καρδίας μου, καὶ ἡ μερίς μου ὁ Θεὸς εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα] *The God of my Heart, and my Part is God for ever*; but in the Original 'tis *Tsurlebhabbi*: God is *the Rock* of my heart. And it is usual in Scripture to call a Man's God his Rock, *Deut.* 32. *v.*30,31, &c. *How should one chase a thousand*, &c. *except their Rock had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up. For their Rock is not as our Rock, our Enemies themselves being Judges.* Here [*God is the God of my Heart, or the Rock of my Heart*] the sense and meaning is, that God is a Support and Security unto him, against all those fears and dangers which did even sink his natural spirit: Though his flesh and heart fail, yet God was an impregnable Rock, that afforded support and security to him.

Doctr. II.

Learn, *That God is a never-failing Rock unto his Children, that affords them safety and security even when all fails, when friends, and flesh, and heart, and all fail.* The Scripture is full of Testimonies to the truth hereof, and it would be but expence of time to produce many for the Confirmation of it. God often-

times

times is called *The Rock of his People*, and he is so called for this reason, because he affords support and security to them. *As the Mountains are about* Jerusalem, *so the Lord is round about them that fear him*, *Ps.* 125. *Begin.* and Isa. 26. *v.* 3.4. *Thou wilt keep them in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed upon thee: because they trusted in thee. Trust in the Lord for ever, for in the Lo d* Jehova *is everlasting strength*: Or (as the Margin expresseth it from the Original) *the Lord Jehova is the Rock of Ages.* Such a Rock is good to his people, that affords them all manner of safety and security, that will preserve them unto everlasting happiness.

For the understanding hereof we must know this, that God is so a Rock to his People to afford them strength and safety; as that notwithstanding his children may be subject to great afflictions, they may be afflicted sore, and with noysome diseases. *Psa.* 38. *v.* 7,8. They may be at a loss, and in distress in their outward condition, as other men; so it was with *Job* and *Heman.* A child of God may be full of fears and discouragements, he may lose the sight of God, God may stand far of and hide himself from their Apprehensions. *Isa.* 40. *v.* 27. and 49. *v.* 14. *Zion said the Lord hath forsaken me. God hath forgotten me.* Such may be their Apprehensions, such their thoughts of themselves, yet notwithstanding, *God is the Rock of their heart, and their Portion for ever.*

Object. But you will say, how is God the strength of their heart, if he suffers not only their flesh, but their heart to fail? You see *Davids* flesh and heart did fail; how was God then the strength of his heart?

Answ.

Answ. The Apostle gives light hereto. 2 *Cor.* 1. *v.* 9. *We received the sentence of Death in our selves, that we might not trust in our selves, but in God that quickens the dead.* His Natural Power, strength, and confidence fail, all his own Wisdome, and Abilities fail, yet faith keeps him up depending upon the Power of God, that was his support; *When I am weak, then I am strong.*

1. God in the greatest weakness of his Children affords strength to their hearts, he is their Rock, he supports their Faith: though all fails, they can trust in him; though they *walk in darkness, and have no light, yet they can trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay themselves upon their God.* Isa. 50. 10. God is the strength of their heart in that respect, though they have not the Faith of Assurance, yet they have the Faith of Reliance; *though God stayes them, yet* he enables *them still to trust in him.* So saith the Apostle; *You are kept by the Power of God through Faith unto salvation,* 1 Pet. 1. 5. God deals with his Children, as some with weak Riders; God locks them to he Saddle. Though their flesh and heart fails, yet God holds up their faith in his Word. And

2. He gives them the end of their faith, that is, the salvation of their souls; Performs his Word to them in which they believe: through faith and patience they inherit the Promise, *Heb. 6.* 12. Now I might give you many Reasons, why God will not fail his people; though the flesh fails, he is such a Rock that never fails. These two I shall produce.

1. The immutability of his Counsel and of his Covenant, that cannot fail, therefore his people and chil-

children are safe; *by an assured Purpose*, (as our old *English* Translation reads it) *wilt thou ordain Peace*; Isa. 26. 3. And the Apostle hath it expressly: *By two immutable things it is impossible for God to lye*, Heb. 6. 18. Gods Counsel and Covenant are unchangeable things, and therefore his Children, that are fore-known by him, and that are within his Covenant must needs be safe; their safety doth not depend upon themselves, and upon their own stability, but upon Gods Purpose and Promise.

2. Because of the unchangeableness of his love. His love is not like Mens, that changeth day by day, *Jer.* 31. 3. God loves his people with *an everlasting love*, therefore they cannot miscarry, he will not desert them in their weakness; Gods love as well as his Covenant doth engage him to be the strength of their heart; *his Gifts and Callings are without Repentance*; He changeth not in his Purposes towards his Children, *I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of* Jacob *are not consumed*. God is a never-failing God unto his children. A little Improvement hereof.

Use 1. Let Sinners then acquaint themselves with this God. Labour to make him your *Rock*, your *Refuge*, and your *Hiding Place*. *Acquaint now thy self with God*, Job 22. 21. *thereby good shall come unto thee. So shalt thou be built up*. Otherwise know this, that a time of fainting and failing will come upon thee. What folly is it to sit down and satisfy our selves with Cisterns, that will be dried, with *broken Cisterns that hold no water*, and to neglect the *fountain of living water*, as God complains of that stupendious

folly of his people, *Jer.* 2. 13. Sinner, look about you; Consider, if you have not God for your Refuge, *Rock*, and Hiding-Place, there is nothing can relieve or support your fainting spirit. Nothing can stand by, when the heart and flesh fails, if God doth not. Make sure your interest in him; he will never fail you; blessed are all they that wait for him. This should be our care; this is the work and duty of every one of us, *To make our Calling and Election sure*; Do but make sure that you know the Lord, and you may expect help at a dead lift, in a time of greatest need; his Love and Covenant will fetch you up again, though in the Depths of Hell, and under Waves, and in the belly of Hell; yet then will the Hand of God relieve you. The Apostle tells us, *Whom he calls, them he justifies, and whom he justifies, them he glorifies.* There is an indissoluble Connexion between Grace and Glory. Make but your Calling sure, and let God alone for the rest. Be assured, that to them whose God he is, he will be a never-failing *Rock* in time of need.

Use II. Let the People of God, that have interest in this *Rock*, be encouraged then in all Cases to hope, and put their confidence in him that never *failes*; even when the flesh *failes*, never suspect the Power of God, even when all failes, never give up thy hope, and hold fast in this Rock of Ages; What a blessed thing is it to have a Refuge, in a storm; a Rock, in danger; this being life in death, when streams are dried up to have a living Fountain, Peace in trouble, Light in darkness, *Psal.* 112. 4. *To the upright there ariseth light in darkness.*

1. Here

1. Here consider for thy Encouragement, what though all fails, the Power of God never fails. *Sion complains, her Way was hid from God; What,* saith God, *hast not thou known and heard that the everlasting God, the Creator of the Ends of the Earth never faintseth nor is weary,* Isa. 40. 28. Again

2. When all fails, yet the Promise and Covenant of God never fails. *David* found it so, his heart and flesh failed, yea, his obedience and hope was like to fail; yet, saith *David, Though my House be not so with God, yet he hath with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure,* 2 Sam. 23. *v.*5. Though he could see no flourishing in his Family, things went not well, yea, went backward in stead of forward; yet he stayed and relieved himself in the Covenant of *God*, when his Flesh failed.

3. Christ doth not fail to make a perpetual Intercession with the Father. Christ hath *an unchangeable Priesthood*, and *he is* therefore *able to save to the utmost all that come to God by him; because he ever lives to make intercession for us*, Heb. 7.v.25. Christ is our dear friend, and sensible of our infirmities, whose natural flesh and heart did fail, for he was really dead, as every man can be, in his humane nature. He is one whom *God* will not deny.

4. Let us betake our selves to this Rock in time of straits, when all fails, for the greatest failing of the Creature is the greatest opportunity for God to stand by and support. God chuseth such a time to glorifie his *Grace* and *Power*; he raiseth the dead, he revives and comforts the sorrowful, he restores them that are at a loss in themselves. Let us labour therefore

to stay our minds and hearts upon *God* in our greatest discouragements. We may oftentimes finde flesh and heart fail before-hand: We meet with things many times that are ready to run us down, while we are in the World, that we are not able to stand under; Let us acquaint our selves therefore with this *Rock*, and with the Life of Faith, to flee unto our Resting place, making *God* our Refuge, our *Rock*, and our Habitation. When all fails, make this an Argument with *God*, *Psal.* 22. *v.* 11. *Be not far from me O Lord, trouble is near, and none to help.* I conclude this Point with a few words of the Psalmist, *Psal.* 143. *v.* 4--7. where you may see what case the Psalmist was in, and what course he took, *My Spirit is overwhelmed within me, I stretched forth my hand to thee, my soul thirsteth after thee as a thirsty Land. Hear my Prayer, O Lord, my spirit fails, hide not thy face from me.* Let us make this Argument with *God* if all Arguments fail, *In him the Fatherless finds mercy; to them that have no might he encreaseth strength*, as the Prophet speaks, *Psal.* 142. 4, 5. *I looked on the right hand, and behold there was no man.* All Refuges fail. *No man cared for my soul, I cried to thee, O Lord,* (what did he say?) *Thou art my Refuge, my Rock, and my Hiding-Place, and Portion in the Land of the Living.* So I come to the last clause of my Text: God is the strength of my Heart, *and my Portion for ever.* Let me speak a few words of this Part also, and I shall conclude, *My Portion for ever.* A Portion signifies a part that upon a Dividend falls to a Mans share, *Gen.* 14. *last.* *Let them take their Portion.* *Abraham* for his part would have no share in the spoil, yet he

he would not prescribe to them, or deprive them of their share, *Luke* 15. The Prodigal saith, give me *my Portion* of goods: God hath a double Portion to distribute a Portion to the wicked, *Psal.* 11. *Upon the wicked he rains snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest. This is the Portion of their Cup.* 'Tis said, *They have their Portion in this life*, Psal. 17.14. The Wicked's Portion is from God, but the Portion of the Saints is in God, even God himself is their Portion, and they are his, *Jer.* 10. *v.* 16. *The Portion of* Jacob *is not like them.* He means God, he is call'd the Portion of *Jacob*, that will not deceive those that put their trust in him. God is the Portion of *Jacob*, and *Jacob* is the Portion of God, *Deut.* 32. *v.* 9. *The Lords Portion is his People*, Jacob *is the Lot of his Inheritance.* I am to speak of God as their *Portion*. By *Portion*, here is meant such a Portion as wherein a Man delights, and is contented, and fully satisfied. So the Psalmist means, *He is my Portion for ever*; and such a Portion as I am pleased with, and find satisfaction, and full contentment in.

Doctr. III.

Hence learn, *God is an All-sufficient Portion to his People, when all things else do fail.* I must not stand here neither to multiply Quotations. God is oftentimes stiled by himself, and by his people, *their Portion*; I shall only shew you what kind of Portion God is to his people, and then make some little Reflections hereof by way of Use and Application. A Portion that satisfies, breeds sweetness and content in the Mind. That which will satisfie the Mind of Man must be suteable to it; all Contentmen ari-

seth from the suteableness between the Object and the Subject: That which must be our Portion, and give content and satisfaction to our Mind, must be, 1. Suteable, and bear a proportion to our faculties and capacities, as we are men. That which satisfies another creature will not satisfie man. Man hath a large capacity: they that take up any satisfaction short of God do not know themselves, and they feed upon that which is not bread. Yea, they feed upon Wind and Ashes. 2. It must be suitable to our wants and necessities; as we are sinners, we want pardon, reconciliation and peace with God; we want assurance, and a right and title to eternal glory. Now nothing can be a satisfying Portion to us, that hath not these Properties. And 3. It must be suitable to our desire, as we are enlightned, and convinced, and spiritually affected Christians. The spiritual Mind will say as the Psalmist here; *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none in Earth I desire besides thee.* Now such a kind of Portion is onely God; a suteable Portion, adequate and commensurate unto our capacities, necessities and desires. We cannot want that which is not in God. He is an Object every way for kind and quality, suitable and commensurate to our case and capacity.

2. That Portion that gives content must have a sufficiency for the quantity of it. The Mind of Man is of a vast capacity. *The Eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the Ear with hearing*, much less the Minde of Man with enjoying, unless he enjoy that, wherein he can finde no limits. Man's Mind is greater then the world.

world. The Mind of Man must be lost in its enjoyment, it must find no bounds, and feel no bottom, else it will quickly grow weary. Now such a Portion to his people is God, I am *El-shaddai*, *I am God All-sufficient*, Gen. 17.1. God is a place of broad waters to his people; as his *Law*, so his Love is exceeding *broad*; we cannot discover the bredth and depth. *Jacob* could say, *I have all*; having God he had all, and where there is all there is nothing wanting.

3. In that portion that must give full contentment to the Minde of Man, there must be Proprietie, as to our right and title. 'Tis a great discouragement to a man, if he hath any crack in his title: he will have but little comfort, being always in fear of being cast out of doors. In this portion the Saints have the surest title, P*sal.*48.*v.last*. *This God is our God*. This great and everlasting God is our God. They can call him *our God* with the highest confidence, and the surest right. He is ours by a Covenant that is everlasting, and will never fail. And

4. And lastly, that portion that will give contentment, must also be in its own nature permanent, otherwise our portion may leave us miserable. The portion of Gods people is an everlasting portion; it wil continue from Age to Age to all Eternity, *God is my Portion for ever*: it will never be spent. The wicked of the World may have a small portion of good things here; it is but for a moment, a day or two, and that is gone: But God *is my Portion*, saith the Prophet, *for ever*.

Use I. I will speak to them that have the Lord for their portion, and then to those that have not so.

First,

First, two or three words to you, that have the Lord for your portion. You are a happy people; *Blessed are the people that are in such a case, yea, happy are they whose God is the Lord.* I hope here are many here, whose portion is God, and many I know profess that it is so with them, and many desire it: You that can claim an interest in God, and own him for your portion. Let me entreat you,

1. To prize and magnifie your portion, and take heed neither by word or carriage, to dishonour or despise your portion, as that prophane person *Esau, who despised his Birthright.* I fear lest perhaps you should disparage your portion, when you look upon others that have much of the world, and admire them, and are envious at them; would you be willing to change portions with them, your portion for theirs? I am sure the Psalmist would not do so; he prays to be *delivered from men that had their portion in this life,* Psal. 17. v. 14. to be delivered, not only from their wrath and malice, but from their society and portion; he would not be numbred among them; he would be delivered from men that have their Portion in this life. Whatever you see in the portion of the men of this World, *The portion of* Jacob *is not like them, Their Rock is not as our Rock, themselves some time or other being Judges.* Therefore let every one that hath the Lord for his portion, take courage and resolution, and magnifie his Portion, *Psal. 16. v. 5, 6. The Lord is the lot of my inheritance, and the portion of my Cup. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places.* When others glory in their fine Houses, and large Estates; in their flourishing Family, some perhaps in one vanity,

and

and some in another; then recal your mind to the contemplation of that blessed portion, that God hath bestowed upon you in himself.

2. If God be your portion, be sure to live upon your portion. A sad thing! others live upon little, and you not make a living upon the great God. 'Tis a sorry portion that cannot afford a subsistence, but men must toil for it. Can't you make a Living of God? is he not enough without creatures? To think so is a disparagement to your portion. That soul is too covetous that can't be content with God. Is there not more in him then in them all? If we own God for our portion, say as the Psalmist, *I have none in Heaven but thee*; and as the Prophet *Habak.* 3.*v.*17. 18. *Although the Fig tree doth not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the Vine, the labour of the Olive shall fail, and the Fields shall yield no meat, the Flock shall be cut off from the Fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls. Yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.* This is that becomes you, and this is that will honour your portion: *When your heart is where your treasure is*: when your comfort and peace can out-live all outward *discouragements* and *enjoyments* whatsoever. This is your duty to live upon your portion, and to satisfie and solace your selves therewith continually. *Lord*, saith *David*, *What do I wait for? truly my Hope is in thee*, Psal. 39. v. 7. and he lays a charge upon his soul, Psal. 62. v.5. *My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.* He hath no expectation from the world, he chargeth his soul to hope only in God, to make God his only portion and satisfaction. So the Church, *Lam.*3.*v.*24.

The

The Lord is my portion, saith my soul, I will hope in him; That is the Conclusion. Take heed of murmuring, by discontent and sadness of spirit, you do but disparage and dishonour your portion.

3. Take heed you do not forego your portion: forsake it not. If you forego your portion you will never minde your self. As saith the Prophet, *All they that depart from thee shall be ashamed:* why? *Because they have forsaken the Lord the Fountain of living water,* Ier.17.v.13. We may *walk in the sparks we have kindled,* for a little while, but all that do so, *shall lie down in sorrow,* Isa 50.v.last. So it is here in the verse following my text, *Lo, they that are far from thee shall perish.* They that forsake God *forsake their own mercy. Naboth* would rather lose his life then his living: he had rather die then forego his portion, *God forbid that I should sell the inheritance of my father.* Much more cause have you to say, (when temptation comes to forsake your peace, and your God) as the Disciples did, *Whither shall we go, for thou hast the words of eternal life?* Say as the Psalmist upon this subject, *Psal.* 119. 57. *Thou art my portion, O Lord, I have said I will keep thy Word.* God brings his portion, he was resolved to keep it.

I conclude all with that of the Apostle, *Jude v.*20, 21. *But ye beloved, building up your selves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost. Keep your selves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*

Last Use. To them that have not God for their portion. Labour to gain this portion. Labour to have and know it. But you may say, this were a

blessed

bleſſed thing indeed, but how ſhall I come to it? I Anſwer,

1. Chuſe the Lord for thy portion: God gives every man his choice. *Joſhua* put the people to their choice. *Chuſe whom you will ſerve*, Joſh. 24. Surely, you can blame none but your ſelves if you make a wrong choice. As *Mary*, ſo muſt you *chuſe that good Part that ſhall not be taken from you*, Luke 10. *laſt*. Many would lay the fault ſome way or other, but they do not chooſe the Lord for their portion; they are not content to take him alone for their eſtate. Say as the Church, *Lam.*3.24. The Lord is my portion, *ſaith my ſoul*. Let not thy *Mouth* only but thy *Soul* ſay in like manner.

2. Be not content without him: reſolve never to take up with, or receive ſatisfaction from any thing till this be attained. Refuſe all other portions without this, ſay, *What wilt thou give me, Lord*, if I go Chriſt-leſs, and God-leſs? If I have no portion in thee, what good will all riches do me? God loves ſuch a reſolute purpoſe, and ſuch a reſolved choice: God loves that the ſoul *ſhould offer violence* to him, when it will have God, and not be ſatisfied without him: As *Luther* ſaid, *I proteſted I would not be put off with any thing beneath himſelf*; this is a brave ſpirit in the account of God. And that's the reaſon why either you miſs God for your portion, or at leaſt you want the comfort that ariſeth from his being our portion, becauſe you are tampering with other objects. The Lord loves when the ſoul is chaſte and ſingular in its affections towards him, when none in heaven but

 him,

him, nor any in Earth but him. Let this be thy *one thing*, that thou must and wilt have or perish.

3. So doing go on and wait upon God, and observe the issue; he will reveal himself to thee, thou shalt assuredly have the Lord for thy portion. I say with all confidence by the Authority of Gods Word; Chuse God for thy portion, chuse him sincerely as the supreme portion of thy soul, so that thou wilt not acquiesce without him; thou wilt not be content unless thou enjoyest him; and go on, wa e, and thou shalt find the Lord. He *meets him that rejoyeth, and worketh righteousness, that wait for him in the way of his judgements*, Isa. 64. 5. And the Apostle assures us, that to them, who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for Glory and Immortality God will render eternal life, *Rom* 2. Let as many of us as either have not God for our portion, or have not yet that clear satisfaction as to be able to say it; chuse him alone for our portion, and go on in our choice; wait upon God, and in due time he will reveal himself unto us. The Text is a large Theme to be insisted upon fully, but we must content ourselves with these brief Meditations, so as I might confine my self within the Compass of the time.

As to the Person deceased, I will say little, lest I should wrong the dead, and offend the living; only this I suppose, she was one that had this text upon her heart, in the power and sweetness of it, and that caused her tongue to make frequent mention of it, and also to recommend it to our Use and Meditation at this time. To fulfil whose desire it hath bin now

briefly,

briefly insisted on. *She believed and therefore spake, she asked and received, she sought and found, she knocked and God opened to her, she chose the Lord for her Portion in life, and she found him so in her death*: I may say of her as the Psalmist, *When* her *flesh and heart failed*, she *found God to be the strength of* her *heart, and* her *portion for ever.*

FINIS.

A SHORT

ACCOUNT

Of some of the

Choice Experiences, Blessed Discoveries, and Gracious Evidences of Mrs. Martha Brooks, *who fell Asleep in Jesus*, June 20. 1676.

Drawn up by a near Relation, that best understood her Spiritual Estate and Condition.

IT is long since, that the Lord made it the Day of his Power upon her soul. Psal. 110. 3.

Many years ago the Great and Glorious God, by his Spirit and Power, by his Word and Rod, brought her from under the Power, Use and Dominion of Sin and Satan, and brought her off from Restings or Stayings upon her own Righteousness, which she daily looked upon to be but filthy Rags, and as a menstruous cloth, and brought her into fellowship and communion with Himself, his Son, and his blessed Spirit, &c.

1 Thes. 1. 5 Pro. 29 15. Ro. 6. 14. Acts 26. 18. Is. 64. 6 John 1. 3, 4. 2 Cor. 13. 14.

To make a full Narration of these great things, would make this Little Piece, to swell beyond its due

pro-

proportion; and though it might please some, yet it would dissatisfie others; and therefore I shall do little more then hint at things, that so I may bring all I intend to say into a narrow Compass.

Sh uld I say all I could

First, About her knowledge and acquaintance with Christ, when and where should I m ke an end. Only this I may say, 1. Her knowledge was inward. 2 It was affectionate. 3. Experimental. 4. Humblings. 5. Growings. 6. Communicative. 7. Practical.

Job 22. 2 1. Joh 117.3. Cn 2.7.17. Cha. 13. 1.

Secondly, should I say all I could about her high Approbation of Christ, when and where should I make an end, only this I may hint. 1. That she highly approved of the Person of Christ, as the most suitable good in Heaven or Earth to her soul. 2. She highly approved of the Personal Excellencies of Christ as the most transcendent Excellencies. 3. She highly approved of Christ in all his Offices, both Kingly, Prophetical and Priestly. 4. She highly approved of all the precious things of Christ. As his Day, his Laws, his Worship, his Ordinances, his Ways, his Saints. 5. She highly approved of the Rebukes, of the severe Rebukes of Christ, knowing that they were the fruits of his love, and that he was holy and wise, just and righteous in all his rebukes, &c.

Acts 4 12. 1 Tim. 1. 15. Col. 1. 19. Chap. 1 2,3 Act. 5.31 Col. 2.6. Rom. 7.12. Psal. 119.72. Rev. 3 19. Dan. 9.14 Neh. 9.33

Thirdly, about her Choice and Election of

of Christ to be her Head and Husband, her Sovereign and Saviour, upon Choice she would have none but Christ to save her, nor none but Christ to rule her. Cant. 2. 16. Deut. 26.17.

Fourthly, about her Reception of Christ, 1. In all his Offices. 2. Into every Room of her soul. 3. Once for all. 4. Upon his own Gospel-terms, *Mat.* 16.24. Joh. 1.12. Ps. 24 7,8 9,10.

Fifthly, about her high, her very high estimation of Christ, she prized above all her duties, above all her Priviledges, above all her Graces, above all her outward Contentments, and above all her spiritual Enjoyments; he was to her the chiefest of ten thousand; he was fairer then the Children of Men; he was the Pearl of Price in her Eye; he was more precious then Rubies to her soul. She looked upon all things as nothing in comparison of Christ; She had rather have one Christ then a thousand worlds. 1 Pet. 2.7 Cân. 5 10 Ps. 45. 2. Mat 13. 26. Pro. 8.11. Phi 3 8.

Sixthly, about her Marriage-Union and Communion with Christ, of which freely and frequently she discoursed both with Ministers and Christians throughout her sickness, her Marriage-Union with Christ was Breasts of Consolation and Wells of Salvation to her, throughout her nine Months sickness by these things she did live, and in these things were the Life of her Spirit. Cant.3.11. Hos. 2.18, 19 20. 2 Cor. 11.2 Psal. 66.11. Chap. 12.3. Isa. 38.16.

7ly, About her trustings and cleavings to Christ, as the Ivy cleaves to the Oak, the Child to the Mother,

ther, or as the Wife cleaves to the Husband. In all her ups and downs, she would be still hanging upon Christ and cleaving to Christ.

Job. 13. 15. Acts. 11. 23. Ruth. 1. 14. Gen. 2. 24.

8ly. About her thirstings, breathings, and Longings, after higher, clearer, and fuller, enjoyments of Christ, she could never have enough of Christ, nor enough of his presence, nor enough of his Spirit, nor enough of his grace, nor enough of his manifestations, nor enough of his consolations, the constant cry of her soul, was more of Christ, more of Christ, O more of Christ.

Psal. 42. 1, 2, 63. Mal. 1. 2, 3. Psal 84. Psal. 27. 4. 8.

Ninthly, About her sad lamenting, and bewailing the withdrawings of Christ. There were no days so sad, so dark, so gloomy, so grievous, so afflictive to her as those days: wherein he that should comfort her soul stood a far off. Lam. 16. The shinings of Christs Face made a Heaven in her heart. And the hidings of his Face, was her only Hell? Let whose would frown, if Christ did but smile all was well.

Cant. 5. 6. Isa. 8. 17. 7, Mic. 7, 8, 9. 2.

Tenthly, About her sympathizing with Christ, in all the dishonors that were done to his Name, his Person, his Day, his Offices, his Ordinances, his Wayes, his Saints, and it was a grief to her to see others grieving of Christ; Other mens sins were matter of her sorrow; The sins of others hath cost her many a prayer, many a sigh, many a tear, and many a groan. Now should I say all I could upon these ten Particulars, when should

Ps. 119. 53. 136. Jer. 9. 1. 2. Ezek. 9. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 4, 7, 8.

I make an end, and therefore I must satisfie my self and the Readur with a hinting at things.

Her whole Life (humane frailties excepted) since God made it the day of his Power upon her soul, was a daily walking with God. And of all the days that ever past over her head, there was none for delight, pleasure, profit, comfort. content, boldness and satisfaction to those wherein she walked most Evenly, most closely, and most exactly with God.

Gen. 5. 22. Cap. 6 9. Gen. 17. 1, Psa. 119. 112. 44 45. Acts 24. 16. Heb. 13. 18.

Concerning sin.

1. Sin of all burdens was her greatest, *Psal.* 38. 4. *Ps.* 40. 12. 2. Her hatred and indignation against sin, was Universal, *Psal.* 119. 104. 128. *Isa.* 2. 20. *Cap.* 30. 22. *Hos.* 14. 8 *Psal.* 119. *ult.* 3. Her whole life was a daily conflicting with sin, *Rom.* 7. 23. 24. *Psal.* 17. 4. She had rather be rid of all her sins, then be rid of all her troubles, sorrows, tryals, bodily Ailments, *Job.* 7. 20, 21. *Cap.* 34. 31, 32. *Hos.* 14. 2. Others are all for the removing of the Judgments and Afflictions they are under, *Exo.* 8. 8. *Num.* 21. 6, 7 *Jer.* 30. 15. 5. She durst not allow her self in any known sin, much less in a course or way of sin, *Psal.* 119. 1. 3. *Rom.* 7. 15. 1 *John* 3. 9, *Prov.* 16. 17. 6. Her greatest conflict was with heart sins, secret sins, spiritual sins, invisible sins. Sins that lye most hid, and remote from the eyes of the World, *Psal.* 19. 12. 119. *Psal.* 113. I hate vain thoughts, secret self Love, secret Pride, secret Unbelief, secret Hypocrisie, secret Murmurings, secret carnal confidence,

 &c.

&c. 2. *Chron.* 12. 25. 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. Did sit closest and saddest upon her spirit. 7. There was an irreconcilable opposition in her soul against sin, she could not, she would not, she durst not upon any terms in the World, admit of any Truce or Reconciliation with sin. 1. *Kings* 14. 30. *Rom* 7. 23. *Gal.* 5 17. *Rom.* 6. 6. *Psal.* 51. 2. 7. *&c.*

Ezek. 16. 61, 63. 2 Co. 7, 11 Ps. 18

8. Her daily slips and falls did daily produce more soul-loathings, soul-humiliation, self-judging, self-abasement, self-abhorrency. 9. Her constant desires, and earnest endeavors, were to avoid and shun all known appearances of Sin, *Gen.* 39. 12. 2 *Cor.* 8 20, 21. 1 *Cor.* 9. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. 1 *Thes.* 5. 22. *Jude* 23. *Exod.* 23, 7. *Deut.* 12. 30. *Pro.* 5. 8. 10. And lastly, she set her self, her soul, her greatest strength, against her bosom-sins, her constitution sins, her most powerful and most prevalent sins; she set her self most against right-eye sins, and right-hand sins.

Concerning Closet-Prayer.

I never knew any Woman spend more time in her Closet, nor keep more private days to God, then she did. The Duties of her Closet were her meat and drink, and she was always best when she was most with God in a corner. She has many a whole day been pouring out her soul before God in her Closet for the Nation, for *Sion*, and the great Concerns of her own Soul, when them about her did judge it more expedient that she had been in her bed, by reason of some bodily infirmity that did hang upon her; but the divine pleasures

sures that she took in her Closet did drown the sense of pain; secret enjoyments of God makes heavy afflictions light, long afflictions short, and bitter afflictions sweet; Is.33.24.91 2 Cor. 4. 17,18.
she found by frequent experience that Closet-duties were mighty enriching, soul-fatning, soul-strengthning, soul-nourishing, and this endeared her to her Closet.

Concerning Ordinances.

All that did throughly know her, did know, 1. That she greatly loved the Ordinances in the Power and Purity. 2. That she highly prized them. 3. That she made emprovements of them, &c. endeavoring according to her measure received so to live, as that she might reflect honour and glory upon the Ordinances. 4. She made conscience of one Ordinance as well as another, *Luke* 15,6. She did not as some, cry up some Ordinances, and cry down others, nor keep close to some, and live in the neglect of others. 5. She ran all hazards in times of dangers to enjoy the Ordinances, and chose rather with *Moses* to suffer afflictions with the People of God, then to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin which were but for a season. Heb. 11.24, 25,26,27. 6. I never knew any Christian under such a load of weaknesses, strive and labour to enjoy the Ordinances as she did the three last years before her death.

Concerning her Love to the Saints.

First, it was sincere for the Image of God, of Christ, of Grace and Holiness, 1 *John* 3. 14. 18. 1 *John* 5. 1. the Image of God was the Load-stone that drew out her love to the Saints.

2. It was universal to one Christian as well as another, to all as well as any, to poor *Lazarus* as well as to rich *Abraham*, to an afflicted and despised *Job* as well as to an admired *David*, to an afflicted *Joseph* as well as to a raised *Jacob*, *Nehem.* 1. 15. *Col.* 1. 4. *Phil.* 4. 21. 1 *Pet.* 2. 17.

3. It was an extensive love, it extended to those that were remote in respect of place, as well as to those that were near, to those Saints whose Faces she never saw, as well as to those whose Faces she daily beheld, and all upon the serious Reports of the Grace of God, that has bin sparkling and shining in them, *Rom.* 5. 26.

4. It was a fervent love, an active love, a love that put her upon doing, upon acting for them, and distributing to them, according to her ability, and their necessity, 1 *Pet.* 1. 22. *Acts* 11. 28, 29, 30. 1 *Pet.* 4. 11. her love was not a cold, idle, lazy love, like theirs in *James* 2. 14. 15, 16, 17.

5. It was a constant love, a permanent love, 1 *Cor.* 13. 8. *Heb.* 13. 1. Let brotherly love continue, 1 *John.* 4. 16. *Prov.* 17. 17. It was a love like that of Christ, who loved his to the end, *John* 13. 1. *chap.* 15. 12. Look as our love must be sincere without hypocrisie, so it must be constant without deficiencie; that love

was

was never true that is not constant; true love like the pulse, will still be beating, it will still be working, and running out to the Person beloved.

6. She loved, honoured and prized them most and best, in whom the spiritual and supernatural causes of love did most shine and sparkle, *Psal.* 15.4. *Psal.*16.3. *Psal.*45.13. *Psal.*119.119. such Saints as were magnificent in grace, noble in grace, glorious in grace, wonderful in grace, had most of her heart, and were most honoured and prized by her, she loved them best that were best,

Concerning the Signal and blessed Presence of God with her, throughout her Nine Months sickness.

This Divine Presence, with his sick and weak Handmaid, did manifest it self several wayes. As first by preserving her Eminently from sinning under her sufferings, as she would often say, *Though I grone, yet I bless God I do not grumble*, I remember what *Job*, *Jeremiah* and *Jonah* said and did in the days of their sore sufferings, but God stood by his poor Handmaid, and greatly armed her against those particular sins, that an afflicted state lays the afflicted open to. Secondly, this glorious Presence of God was manifested by keeping up in her daily exercise of those particular graces that was to be acted in an afflicted condition, as faith, hope, patience, self denial, contentation and submission. Thirdly, this gracious Presence of God did manifest it self, by enabling his weak and sick Handmaid in all her continued weakness to be still a justi-

Lam. 1. 18. Ps. 119.75. Gen. 18.25. Joh. 18.11. Lam. 3.26, 27,28. Rev. 20.2.

fying of God, and crying out, *the Lord is righteous, the Lord is righteous, he is holy and just, he can do me no wrong, he will do me no wrong, though the Cup be bitter to the flesh, yet it is a Cup that my Father hath put into my hand, and therefore I will drink it, and lay my hand upon my Mouth, and be silent at my Fathers foot.*

Fourthly, this gracious Presence of God was signally manifested in the chaining up of Satan; for the greatest part of her Sickness, her body being very low, her spirits low, and her strength low; and by reason of her great and many weaknesses, she was cast unavoidably under great indispositions, both as to civil and sacred things, the greater was the mercy in Gods chaining up of Satan, and if now and then Satan began to be busie, the Lord quickly rebuked him, and laid a Law of restraint upon him. Fifthly, this gracious Presence of God was signally manifested in keeping down, and in keeping off the fears and terrors of death; she could all along cast the Gauntlet to death, & say with the Apostle, *O Death where is thy sting, O Grave where is thy Victory*, &c? Death is the King of terrors, as *Job* speaks, and The Terror of Kings, as the Philosopher speaks; and yet the great and blessed God took away the dread and terrour of death from her. If you ask those that lie under the fears and terrors of death, they will tell you, that deliverance from those fears and terrors would be a Heaven on this side Heaven unto them. I could greatly enlarge, but that both the Press and the Bookseller calls aloud upon me to conclude.

1 Cor. 15.55 .6.57 Job 18. 14. He. 2.14 15.

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The design of these few Hints is to comfort and encourage Relations and Friends, to write after this blessed Copie and Example of that dear Servant of Christ, who hath now exchanged Earth for Heaven, a Wilderness for a Paradice, a sick bed for a Royal Throne, pains, strong and long pains for everlasting Pleasures, and the presence of poor, frail, sinful Mortals, for the Presence of God, Christ, Angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect.

Psalm. 16. ult. Heb. 12. 22, 23.

FINIS.

Books printed for and are to be sold by John Hancock, at the three Bibles in Pope's Head Alley, in Corn-hill.

TWelve Books lately published by Mr. *Thomas Brooks*, late preacher of the Gospel at *Marg. New Fish street.* 1. *Precious Remedies against Satans Devices*; or Salve for Believers and Unbelievers sores; being a Companion for those that are in Christ or out of Christ. 2. *Heaven on Earth*; or, A serious discourse touching a well grounded assurance of mans everlasting happiness.

3. The unsearchable Riches of Christ, held forth in 22. Sermons.

4. *Apples of Gold for Young Men and Women.* 5. *A string of Pearls*; or, The best things reserved til last. 6. *The Mute Christian under the Smarting Rod, with Sovereign Antidotes against the most miserable Exigents.*

7. *An Ark for all Gods* Noahs *in a stormy day.*

8. *The Crown and Glory of Christianity*, in 48. Sermons, on *Heb.* 12. 14.

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10. *An Heavenly Cordial*, for such as have had (or escaped) the Plague.

11. *A Cabinet of choice Jewels*; or, *A Box of Precious Oyntment*: Containing special Maxims, Rules, and Directions: in order to the clearing up of a mans interest in Christ, and his title to all the Glory of another World.

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